



# EAC QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

## THE EAC ADOPTS VVSG 2.0

On February 10, 2021, EAC Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt the Voluntary Voting Systems Guidelines (VVSG) 2.0. The adoption of the VVSG 2.0 is a major step toward improving the manufacturing and testing of

voting machines, and these updated guidelines will pave the way for the next generation of voting systems across the country. The approved VVSG 2.0 documents include the Principles and Guidelines and Requirements, the Testing and Certification Program Manual, and Voting System Test Laboratories (VSTL) Manual. Major updates were made to both the organization and content of the VVSG in this latest version.

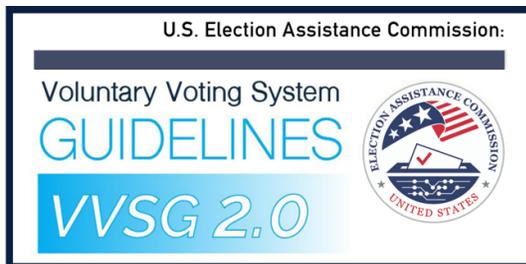
During her presentation to the Commissioners, Executive Director Mona Harrington highlighted the:

- Improved cybersecurity requirements
- Interoperability
- Improved accessibility requirements
- Ballot secrecy, improved auditability, user-centered design, and reorganization

Additionally, the Testing and Certification Program Manual includes updates to require penetration testing during the Test Readiness Review (TRR) stage of certification testing and outlines a pilot program for component testing.

While VVSG 2.0 has been adopted by the EAC, there is still work to be done. Accreditation of Voting System Test Labs to VVSG 2.0 is expected to take 6-8 months and is a joint effort between NIST's NVLAP program and the EAC. The EAC is also working on a VVSG lifecycle policy that will map out how often VVSG will be updated, when older versions of VVSG will be sunset, and how the VVSG will be maintained throughout its lifecycle, with or without a quorum of commissioners. The EAC plans to present a draft of the policy to stakeholders in the coming weeks for their input and review.

The [VVSG 2.0 document](#), [Testing and Certification Program Manual](#), and [VSTL Program Manual](#) are available on the EAC's website. A recording of the EAC [Vote on the VVSG 2.0](#) is also available.



## Disability & Voting Accessibility in the 2020 Elections

On February 17, 2021 the EAC released the "[Disability and Voting Accessibility in the 2020 Elections](#)" comprehensive national report. The study was completed under the clearinghouse and research mandates outlined in the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and analyzed the 2020 election experience for voters with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study was completed in collaboration with a team from [Rutgers University Program for Disability Research](#). Professors [Lisa Schur](#) and [Douglas Kruse](#) joined EAC Commissioners for the Accessibility Lessons Learned from the 2020 Elections Roundtable to discuss key findings from the report. The discussion is available on the [EAC's YouTube Channel](#).

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### DID YOU KNOW?

**The deadline to complete the no-cost election specific cybersecurity training from [the Center for Tech and Civic Life \(CTCL\)](#), is May 31.** Visit the [CTCL website](#) to access the free training. So far, 462 election officials from 47 states have taken the training. You may be able to earn continuing education credits for this training. For questions on earning credit, please contact your state or local election office.



"As I take on the role of Chairman, I look forward to working with the other Commissioners to ensure the EAC prioritizes a positive voter experience, build trust in the nation's voting systems, and better serve election officials by offering resources that increase professional training in election administration across the country."

## EAC CHAIRMAN DONALD PALMER



CHAIRMAN  
DONALD PALMER



VICE CHAIR  
THOMAS HICKS



COMMISSIONER  
CHRISTY MCCORMICK



COMMISSIONER  
BEN HOVLAND

### EAC CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIR BEGIN NEW TERMS

On February 24, Commissioner Donald Palmer began his one-year term as the Chairman of the EAC. Chairman Palmer will serve alongside EAC Vice Chair Thomas Hicks, and EAC Commissioners Christy McCormick and Ben Hovland. Chairman Palmer identified the following areas as agency priorities for his tenure:

- Building a testing program for election technology to increase the security of election systems, including electronic poll books
- Increasing EAC's initiatives regarding accessibility for voters with disabilities. This includes increased resources and staff dedicated to accessibility.
- Developing additional enhanced training opportunities for election officials and workers. This includes cybersecurity training and other election administration competencies.

The EAC's announcement of Chairman Palmer's term is [available now](#). Additional information about Chairman Palmer's background can be found on the [EAC's website](#).

### NEW EAC LOGO

The EAC recently debuted a new seal that reflects the mission and work of the agency. Since the agency was established by the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA), the EAC used a variation of the Great Seal of the United States.

As the new seal was developed, the following considerations were made, and elements incorporated:

- The seal reflects the EAC's testing and certification of voting machines by showing a circuit board.
- The circuit board diodes incorporate the word "VOTE" in Braille reflecting the importance of accessibility for voters with disabilities and EAC's role in ensuring all Americans can vote privately and independently.
- The flag reflects democracy, the EAC as a federal agency, and voters' rights.
- The three stars in the flag represent the three main functions of the EAC: Clearinghouse, Testing and Certification, Research.
- The ballot box reflects the various options of voting and the EAC's mission to assist with election administration best practices.



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U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC)

## Clearinghouse Awards

Best practices in election administration

1. Outstanding innovations in elections;
2. Best practices related to recruiting, training & retaining election workers;
3. Improving accessibility for voters with disabilities;
4. Most creative or original 'I Voted' stickers; and
5. Outstanding innovation in election cybersecurity and technology.

## 2020 CLEARIE AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

On March 4 the EAC announced the winners of the [2020 Clearinghouse "Clearie" Awards](#). The award categories include innovation in election administration; improving accessibility for voters with disabilities; best practices in recruiting, training, and retaining poll workers; innovation in election cybersecurity and technology; and creative and original "I Voted" sticker design.

Winners were selected by two independent panels of election officials from the EAC's advisory boards, and EAC Commissioners served as judges for the sticker category. Now in its fifth year, the 2020 Clearie Awards received a record breaking 137 submissions. The EAC is excited to recognize the hard work of election officials from across the country. The 26 winning submissions are highlighted on [the EAC's website](#). This year the EAC also recognized [15 Honorable Mention awardees](#).

## 2020 EAVS UPDATE

The EAVS project team would like to thank states and territories for their diligence during the 2020 EAVS data collection period. Data will be locked on March 30, 2021 and staff are working hard to review the information collected for state certification. The 2020 EAVS comprehensive [report](#) and [datasets](#) will be available no later than June 30, 2021.

After the final report is released, preparations for 2022 EAVS will commence to include an after-action review of 2020 survey administration, a working group focused on enhancing Section A and the public comment period for the 2022 questionnaire.

Information regarding the 2021 Election Data Forum will be made available on [the EAC website](#). This year's forum will be held virtually in summer 2021.

## CARES AND HAVA GRANTS UPDATE

- Annual reports are currently under review and will be posted to our website once they receive approval.
- CARES off cycle reporting was due on February 28 to determine the unexpended federal amounts as of December 31, 2020. These reports will be under review in the coming weeks and posted to our website once they are approved.
- Some CARES grants are ready for closeout and they will be going through that process as described in the recent EAC Closeout Webinar - posted to the EAC's website: <https://www.eac.gov/payments-and-grants/financial-progress-reporting>
- Mid-year reporting for the period ending March 31, 2021 is due no later than April 30, 2021.

# U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

## 2020 Annual Report



## THE EAC 2020 ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS AGENCY ACHIEVEMENTS

The EAC's [2020 Annual Report](#) is now available. The report highlights the achievements and activities of the EAC, and the support, guidance, resources, and collaboration provided to election officials and voters during the past year.

In 2020 the EAC:

- disbursed \$400 million in CARES Act grants and \$425 million in HAVA security grants;
- expanded our staff across departments to enhance our mission;
- chaired the Election Infrastructure GCC/SCC Joint COVID Working Group;
- heard election officials' concerns about the shortage of poll workers during the primaries and designated September 1st as National Poll Worker Recruitment Day and set up [www.helpamericavote.gov](http://www.helpamericavote.gov);
- took steps toward advancing the [the VVSG 2.0](#) which was adopted on February 10, 2021;
- produced the [Lessons Learned from the 2020 Primary document](#);
- held two in-person events before the pandemic and held 36 virtual webinars, hearings and meetings after the onset of the pandemic;
- launched the Cyber Access and Security Program (CAS) to provide access to security training, best practices, expertise, and other assistance for election officials;
- offered online cybersecurity training for election officials at no cost and developed specifically through a partnership with the Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL).

## INTERVIEW SERIES CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH AND WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

EAC Commissioners participated in two interview series highlighting the achievements of election officials across the country.

The EAC Celebrated Black History Month in February 2021 with the Excellence in Elections – Black History Month Interview Series. Thank you to Lance Gough, retired Executive Director of the Chicago Board of Elections; Michael Winn, Chief Deputy of Administration Harris County Clerk's Office; Toni Pippins-Poole, retired Dallas County Elections Administrator; New Jersey Secretary of State Tahesha Way; and Montgomery, Alabama Mayor Steven Reed for engaging in meaningful conversations about their work and the importance of Black History Month.

March is Women's History Month and the EAC has relaunched the Women in Elections series to celebrate women who are leading in election administration and cybersecurity. Thank you to Amelia Powers Gardner, Utah County Clerk/Auditor; Gema Howell, IT Security Engineer at the National Institute of Standards of Technology; Jacquelyn Callanen, Bexar County, Texas Elections Administrator; Florida Secretary of State Laurel Lee; Vicki Davis, Martin County Supervisor of Elections; and Sherri Wharton Hadskey, Commissioner of Elections for the Louisiana Secretary of State's office; and Dianna Moorman, Director of Elections and General Registrar for James City County Voter Registration and Elections.

The EAC also launched another interview series, 2020 Elections Lessons Learned, to discuss lessons learned, challenges, and to review successful practices and initiatives in election administration during the 2020 election cycles.

The interviews are available on [the EAC's YouTube channel](#).